

PLEASE, SANTA CLAUS, WON'T YOU GIVE THIS BOY A NEW PAIR OF FEET?

Poor, Crippled Charlie Nicholson Writes a Pathetic Petition.

BOTH FEET ARE GONE.

Little Fellow Lost Them in an Accident in Erie Railroad Yards.

Dear Santa Claus:
Please fetch me a new foot as I have no feet. I would like to walk again. I am nine years old. Also fetch me a Teddy bear, please fetch sister a big doll and carriage. From CHARLIE NICHOLSON, 107 Jackson street, Hoboken.

In the Erie Railroad yards at Jersey City on the afternoon of April 26, this year, some boys were having the finest kind of fun hanging almost by their teeth to the slowly moving freight cars and holding up imaginary treasure trains. Charlie Nicholson, strong and sturdy, a leader among his playmates, was among them. A missus, a cry of fright, and the tail end of a loaded freight car passed across the little chaps. Some of the yardmen summoned by the horrified boys, picked up the crushed and bleeding form. Both feet were gone and the legs were crushed and splintered.

At St. Francis's Hospital the surgeons examined the injured child. Learning that the boy's parents were Catholics they summoned a priest. But the lad did not die, although the last sacraments were administered.

The crushed stumps were carefully dressed and every effort was made to save the boy's life. Three times the right leg was operated on and portions cut away. On July 26 he was taken home to his parents a helpless cripple, but very much alive.

Big Family to Feed.

Charlie's home is on Jackson street, on the ground floor of a big double tenement. There is the father, Robert, a hard working teamster, the mother, Blanch, a delicate half-nourished little woman, and in addition to the crippled boy, there are to feel clothes, Madeline, six; Elmer, four; Winfield, two and baby Virginia seven months.

After coming home from the hospital the boy was sent to school at the window washing old Saverys and their sports-pleasures now denied him. He had to be lifted about and when one day the father brought home a wife and a small child and a little practice move himself about he was delighted. When school opened in his new home he sat down and began to recite his lessons. It was something like old times, but he wanted all feet.

"Will they never grow out again?" he asked Mrs. Nicholson one day.

The railroad company never gave the lad a pension or money. It never even wrote him a letter to inquire whether he ever lived or died.

He often learned that he was "trepassing" when he got hurt. According to the boy, he had to pay for medical damages, and no doubt they felt relieved.

As far now about this letter? To the Evening World, Santa Claus, Charles had heard of artificial feet. Somebody had sent a circular to the movie show, a boy sitting down with a pair of false legs, showing the same lad standing upright with baseball bat, his hands behind his head.

"I think 'make-believe' feet, as he called them, were something he once turned his faith to. He talked of them, he addressed them to the sky, he drew a picture about in his pocket, and while at his lessons in school he would bring out and gaze at it with face lit up with pride. If he could have those 'make-believe' feet, but these would cost him all his accumulated dollars and to his father and mother this sum was a thing impossible."

He Writes for Feet.

The boy was sitting at the window. Sunday evening the Teddy bear ran in from the Sun. "Well, I'm mighty glad," said Mr. Nicholson, "that she has time she might try and make one for him. He laid the scissors down and the needle and thread and took where a half dozen of the former contrivances were playing 'cat's'-eye."

The mother said nothing, but presently she saw the boy take a lead from his school blank book and begin to write. "I will make my feet," he said, "and if you will believe me, I will make them."

"I don't think you will have time to make my Teddy bear," he said, "and I can't make mine."

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